United Nations A/BUR/56/SR.1

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
24 September 2001

Original: English

General Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 14 September 2001, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Han Seung-soo (President of the General Assembly)..... (Republic of Korea)

Contents

Organization of the fifty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: memorandum by the Secretary-General

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

01-53615 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of the fifty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: memorandum by the Secretary-General (A/BUR/56/1 and Add.1)

Section I: Introduction

Paragraphs 3 and 4

1. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII and VIII to its rules of procedure. It took note of paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.*

Section II: Organization of the session

Paragraphs 5 and 5 bis (General Committee)

2. *The Committee took note of the decision and resolutions referred to in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's memorandum. It also took note of paragraph 5 bis contained in the addendum to the Secretary-General's memorandum.*

Paragraphs 6 to 10 (Rationalization of work)

3. *The Committee took note of paragraphs 6, 7, 9 and 10 and decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.*

Paragraph 11 (Opening date of the session)

4. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to resolution 55/14, by which the Assembly amended rule 1 of its rules of procedure to read that the Assembly should meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday following the second Monday in September.*

Paragraph 12 (Closing date of the session)

5. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should recess not later than Tuesday, 11 December 2001, and close on Monday, 9 September 2002. The Committee also decided to recommend to the Assembly that the First Committee should complete its work by Friday, 9 November, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) by Friday, 16 November, the Sixth Committee by Friday, 23 November, the Third Committee by Wednesday, 28 November, and the Second and Fifth Committees by Friday, 7 December 2001.*

Paragraphs 13 to 15 (Schedule of meetings)

6. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. promptly for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees. The Committee also decided to recommended to the Assembly that, as a cost-saving measure, plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, including informal meetings, should be adjourned by 6 p.m., and that no meetings should be held on weekends. It further decided to recommend that the cost-saving measure should also apply, for the remainder of 2001, to meetings on the calendar of conferences and meetings.*

7. *The Committee decided to recommended that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the quorum requirements for plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees and should remind delegations of the utmost importance of punctuality in the interest of ensuring an effective and orderly organization of work and achieving economies for the United Nations.*

8. **The Chairman** strongly endorsed the suggestions made at previous sessions that each delegation should designate one of its members to be present at the scheduled starting time of meetings. While some progress had been reported, there was still considerable room for improvement. He therefore urged all delegations to cooperate.

Paragraphs 16 to 18 (General debate)

9. *The Committee took note of paragraph 16 specifying the dates of the general debate, decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 17 suggesting a voluntary guideline of 20 minutes for statements in the general debate and decided to recommend that the procedures outlined in paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's memorandum should also apply during the fifty-sixth session.*

10. **The Chairman** urged representatives, in view of the large number of speakers already inscribed on the list of speakers in the general debate, to take the floor in the order in which they appeared on the list. Those

Items 1 to 6

30. **The Chairman** said that, since items 1 to 6 had already been dealt with, he took it that there were no comments on their inclusion in the agenda.

31. *It was so agreed.*

Items 7 to 20

32. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of items 7 to 20 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 21 to 32

33. **The Chairman** drew attention to paragraph 6 of the addendum to the Secretary-General's memorandum (A/BUR/56/1/Add.1). He said that a new item 21, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" should be inserted after item 20, with items 21 to 32 becoming sub-items (a) to (l) of the new item. He took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of the new item 21 with sub-items (a) to (l) in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session. Items 21 to 32 would be deleted and subsequent items renumbered accordingly.

34. *It was so decided.*

Items 33 to 55

35. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of items 33 to 55 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 56

36. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 56 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 57

37. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 57 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 58 to 62

38. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 58 to 62 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 63

39. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 63 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 64

40. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 64 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 65

41. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 65 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 66

42. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 66 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 67

43. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 67 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

item 68

44. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 68 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 69 to 72

45. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 69 to 72 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 73

46. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 73 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 74

47. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 74 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 75 to 95

48. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 75 to 95 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 96 to 105

49. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 96 to 105 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 106

50. **Mr. Ould Deddach** (Mauritania) said that, following consultations with Madagascar and France, his delegation wished to propose that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that consideration of the item entitled "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India" should be deferred to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, without prejudice to the positions of those two countries on the issue.

51. **Mr. Seixas da Costa** (Portugal) said that his delegation supported the proposal made by the representative of Mauritania.

52. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that consideration of the item should be deferred to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly and that it should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.*

Items 107 to 119

53. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 107 to 119 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 120 to 131

54. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 120 to 131 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 132 to 170

55. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 132 to 170 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Items 171 to 179

56. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 171 to 179 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 180

57. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 180 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 181

58. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 181 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 182

59. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 182 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 183

60. **The Chairman** said that the inclusion of item 183, entitled "Observance of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict", had been proposed by Kuwait (A/56/143) and that the representative of Kuwait had asked to address the Committee on the matter in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

61. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Al-Awdi (Kuwait) took a place at the Committee table.*

62. **Mr. Al-Awdi** (Kuwait) said that military aggression caused severe harm to the environment, which must be preserved for succeeding generations. The people of Kuwait, for example, were still suffering from the effects of the damage done to the environment during the Gulf War. Kuwait was therefore proposing that an "International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict" be observed each year on 6 November. He hoped that the debate on the inclusion of the item in the agenda would not be politicized.

63. *Mr. Al-Awdi (Kuwait) withdrew.*

64. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 183 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

unable to speak at the scheduled time would be put at the end of the list for that meeting.

Paragraphs 19 to 21 (Explanations of vote, right of reply, points of order and length of statements)

11. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of its decision 34/401 dealing with explanations of vote and the right of reply. It also decided to recommend to the Assembly that points of order should be limited to five minutes.*

12. *The Committee further decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241 and to paragraph 23 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of that resolution (A/52/855), which stated that, since in plenary meetings the length of statements in debates other than the general debate averaged eight minutes, the General Assembly might wish to review the recommendation of a 15-minute limit contained in paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241.*

13. *The Committee further decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to rules 72 and 114 of its rules of procedure and to paragraph 22 of annex VI thereto for appropriate action in plenary meetings and in the Main Committees.*

Paragraph 22 (Records of meetings)

14. *The Committee decided to take note of paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and, in that connection, decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the practice of not reproducing in extenso statements made in a Main Committee should be maintained for the fifty-sixth session.*

Paragraph 23 (Seating arrangements)

15. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 23 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 24 (Concluding statements)

16. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need for the full implementation of paragraph 17 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby concluding statements could be made only by presiding officers.*

Paragraphs 25-28 (Resolutions)

17. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 32 of its decision 34/401 and to recommendation 3 (f) of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, to paragraph 5 of its resolution 48/264 and to paragraphs 1 and 10 of the annex to its resolution 45/45.*

Paragraphs 29-31 (Documentation)

18. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 28 of its decision 34/401, to the annex to its decision 55/488 reiterating that "the terms 'takes note of' and 'notes' are neutral terms that constitute neither approval nor disapproval", to paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/264 and to paragraph 5 of section C of its resolution 54/248 emphasizing that documents must be available in accordance with the six-week rule for simultaneous distribution in the six official languages of the General Assembly.*

19. *The Committee also decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 32 of the annex to its resolution 51/241 appealing to all bodies to exercise restraint in requesting new reports and to consider integrating, biennializing or triennializing the presentation of reports, to paragraph 15 of the annex to its resolution 55/285 on the need for Member States to take concrete action to implement paragraph 32 of the annex to resolution 51/241, including by requesting more integrated reports and to paragraph 17 of the annex to its resolution 55/285 stating that Member States and entities of the United Nations system should submit their replies and inputs to requests for information or views pursuant to resolutions of the General Assembly within the prescribed deadlines.*

Paragraphs 32 to 36 (Questions related to the programme budget)

20. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions referred to in paragraphs 32 and 33, to the observations contained in paragraphs 34 and 35 and to paragraph 36 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.*

Paragraphs 37 and 38 (Observances and commemorative meetings)

21. *The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 37 and 38 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, including a 15-minute limit on statements.*

Paragraphs 39 and 40 (Special conferences)

22. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.*

Paragraphs 41 and 42 (Meetings of subsidiary organs)

23. **The Chairman** drew attention to a letter dated 30 August 2001 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/56/322) informing him that the Committee had recommended that a number of subsidiary organs should be authorized to meet during the main part of the fifty-sixth session, on the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services. The General Assembly, at its second plenary meeting on 13 September 2001, had authorized the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund and the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to meet during the main part of its fifty-sixth session. Authorization to meet was sought, in addition, for the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund and the resumed first session of the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

24. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should authorize the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund to meet and the resumed first session of the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee on the Second World Assembly on Ageing to be held during the main part of the fifty-sixth session.*

25. *The Committee further decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 42 of the Secretary-General's memorandum recalling that, in the light of paragraph 7 of resolution 55/245 B, a resumed third session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Financing for Development would be held from 15 to 19 October 2001.*

Section III: Adoption of the agenda (A/56/150 and 200)

Paragraph 43

26. **The Chairman** said that, in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Committee would not consider the substance of any item except insofar as it bore on the question of whether or not to recommend the inclusion of that item in the agenda.

Paragraph 44 to 44 ter (Rationalization of General Assembly procedures)

27. *The Committee took note of the suggestions made in paragraph 44 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 23 to 26 of the annex to resolution 51/241. It also decided to take note of the provisions referred to in paragraph 44 bis whereby all cooperation items would be clustered under an item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" and of the provisions referred to in paragraph 44 ter concerning the biennialization of certain items.*

Paragraphs 45 and 46 (Inclusion of items)

Items 180, 182, 185, 186 and 190

28. **The Chairman** noted that the Secretary-General, in paragraph 45 of his memorandum, drew attention to decision 49/426 whereby the Assembly had decided that the granting of observer status should in future be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities covered matters of interest to the Assembly. Decision 49/426 would be of relevance for the consideration of the inclusion of items 180, 182, 185, 186 and 190.

29. *The Committee took note of paragraph 45.*

Item 184

65. **The Chairman** said that the inclusion of item 184, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum", had been proposed by Kiribati (A/56/144) and that the representative of Nauru had asked to address the Committee on the matter under rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

66. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Clodumar (Nauru) took a place at the Committee table.*

67. **Mr. Clodumar** (Nauru) said that he was speaking on behalf of the States members of the Pacific Islands Forum that were Members of the United Nations, namely, Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, as well as on behalf of the Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum. The inclusion of the proposed item in the agenda would provide a very useful opportunity for consideration of the unique issues facing the States members of the Forum and of the important role of cooperation between the Forum and the United Nations in addressing those issues. Inclusion of the item would also ensure that relations between the Forum and the United Nations were on a par with those between the Organization and other regional groups. In addition, it would facilitate plans to integrate existing multi-sectoral cooperation between the United Nations and members of the Forum, provide a focal point for efforts to coordinate the regional activities of the different components of the United Nations system and ensure that the views of the Forum's members were heard by all States Members of the Organization.

68. The customary way of life of the peoples of the Pacific faced real challenges, as island nations sought to balance traditional and colonial forms of governance in an increasingly globalized age. Recent events in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Bougainville highlighted some of the problems that arose when traditional governance systems were faced with dramatic and complex changes, including the changes required by trade liberalization and the adverse impact of climate change and rising sea levels. Close cooperation with the United Nations would therefore continue to be an important part of the efforts of the members of the Forum to address those challenges.

69. *Mr. Clodumar (Nauru) withdrew.*

70. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 184 in the agenda as sub-item (m) of the new item on cooperation.*

Item 185

71. **The Chairman** said that the inclusion of item 185, entitled "Observer status for the International Hydrographic Organization in the General Assembly", had been proposed by Monaco (A/56/145) and that the representatives of Hungary, Monaco and Portugal had asked to address the Committee on the matter under rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

72. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Erdos (Hungary), Mr. Boisson (Monaco) and Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal) took places at the Committee table.*

73. **The Chairman** said that the representative of Italy had asked to participate in the discussion of item 185. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the request.

74. *It was so decided.*

75. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Borzi Cornacchia (Italy) took a place at the Committee table.*

76. **Mr. Boisson** (Monaco) said that the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) was a consultative and technical intergovernmental organization established by a Convention signed at Monaco on 3 May 1967. The Convention resulted from the desire of the participating Governments to pursue on an intergovernmental basis their cooperation in hydrography. The two principal bodies of IHO were the International Hydrographic Conference, which was composed of representatives of the Governments of member States, and the International Hydrographic Bureau, which was responsible for carrying out the tasks assigned to it by the Convention or the Conference. The Organization routinely encouraged the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral technical assistance agreements while endeavouring to establish even closer relations with the international finance institutions. By allowing it to participate in the sessions of the General Assembly, observer status would enable IHO to work more closely with the United Nations programmes and institutions with a view to increasing cooperation and coordination in various marine science activities and to develop its training and capacity-building activities.

77. **Mr. Florent** (France), supported by **Ms. Borzi Cornacchia** (Italy), **Mr. Gounaris** (Greece), **Mr. Erdos** (Hungary) and **Mr. Seixas da Costa** (Portugal), said that his delegation was in favour of the proposal for the inclusion of the item in the agenda. Greater coordination and cooperation between IHO and the United Nations would strengthen technical assistance activities in the field of hydrography throughout the world.

78. *Mr. Boisson (Monaco), Ms. Borzi Cornacchia (Italy), Mr. Erdos (Hungary) and Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal) withdrew.*

79. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 185 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 186

80. **The Chairman** said that the inclusion of item 186, entitled "Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly", had been proposed by the Sudan (A/56/191) and that the representative of the Sudan had asked to address the Committee on the matter under rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

81. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Erwa (Sudan) took a place at the Committee table.*

82. **The Chairman** said that the representatives of Burkina Faso and Nigeria had asked to participate in the discussion of item 186. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests.

83. *It was so decided.*

84. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) and Mr. Osio (Nigeria) took places at the Committee table.*

85. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) said that observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly would facilitate the economic and development efforts of the members of the Community and thereby help to achieve the purposes and principles of the Organization in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

86. **Mr. Kafando**, supported by **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria) and **Mr. Yahya** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), said that the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States and the United Nations shared the same goals of improving the standard of living and promoting the economic development of peoples. Indeed the impact of the Community's activities was felt far beyond the Sahelo-Saharan region. Cooperation with the United Nations would, moreover, benefit both bodies. He therefore supported the proposal for the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

87. *Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) and Mr. Osio (Nigeria) withdrew.*

88. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 186 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

89. **The Chairman** said that item 187, entitled "International convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings", had been proposed by France and Germany (A/56/192), and that the representative of Germany had asked to address the Committee on the matter under rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

90. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Schumacher (Germany) took a place at the Committee table.*

91. **Mr. Schumacher** (Germany) said that announcements by laboratories and researchers of the intention to proceed in the near future with reproductive cloning of human beings posed serious problems for human dignity and identity and had rightfully met with widespread concern and condemnation. France and Germany shared that concern and had therefore proposed an initiative to undertake negotiations on an international legal instrument banning the reproductive cloning of human beings. Such negotiations must be open to all States and to the participation of specialized agencies, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). They acknowledged the important work that had been undertaken in that field by other organizations, UNESCO in particular. Article 11 of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, unanimously adopted by UNESCO and endorsed by the General Assembly, stated that practices which were contrary to human dignity, such as reproductive cloning of human beings, should not be permitted. The time had now come to translate that declaration into a legally binding norm.

92. *Mr. Schumacher (Germany) withdrew.*

93. **Mr. Doutriaux** (France) said that France and Germany had examined a number of possible options and had determined that the General Assembly was the appropriate venue for such an initiative in view of the multidisciplinary nature of the issue, all aspects of which would not be covered by any other major agency. The Sixth Committee, and more specifically, a specialized working group under its aegis, would be the most appropriate body to carry it forward.

94. France and Germany suggested that the negotiations should proceed in two phases: first, the specialized working group should establish the terms of reference of the negotiations, on the understanding that the second phase, negotiations on the draft convention, would not begin until such time as the terms of reference had been approved by the General Assembly. Although the challenge of establishing an international legal instrument banning human reproductive cloning was an urgent one, France and Germany believed that a gradual approach was best, so that everyone could come to understand the complex legal and scientific nature of the question. Negotiations properly prepared with the contributions of experts would best serve the purpose of establishing a good convention. In order to attain that goal, the contribution of all would be indispensable.

95. **The Chairman** said that the representative of Senegal had asked to participate in the discussion of item 187. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the request.

96. *It was so decided.*

97. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Fall (Senegal) took a place at the Committee table.*

98. **Mr. Fall** (Senegal) said that his delegation welcomed the French and German initiative to include the item on the agenda. Those delegations had amply examined considerations of a moral, ethical, legal, technical, diplomatic and procedural nature. He wished to add that the Organization of African Unity, at its thirty-second summit, held in Yaounde in 1996, had adopted a resolution on bioethics and development, which examined those same issues.

99. *Mr. Fall (Senegal) withdrew.*

100. **The Chairman** said that the representative of Monaco had asked to participate in the discussion of item 187. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the request.

101. *It was so decided.*

102. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Boisson (Monaco) took a place at the Committee table.*

103. **Mr. Boisson** (Monaco) said that the Government of the Principality of Monaco supported the inclusion of the item on the agenda. For ethical, moral and scientific reasons, it was absolutely crucial for the international community to take up the issue, which affected the dignity of human beings. The previous year, the Principality of Monaco had hosted a colloquium sponsored by UNESCO that had discussed certain elements of the question: the conclusions could perhaps be distributed to interested delegations.

104. *Mr. Boisson (Monaco) withdrew.*

105. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 187 in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session.*

Item 188

106. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to begin its consideration of item 188, entitled "Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-three million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected" (A/56/193 and Add.1-3).

107. He informed members that a letter he had received from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay dated 6 September 2001 and addressed to the Secretary-General had been inadvertently issued as document A/56/193/Add.2. The addendum had been withdrawn, and the letter would be reissued as document A/56/355.

108. The representative of the Gambia had asked to participate in the discussion of item 188 in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

109. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Baldeh (Gambia) took a place at the Committee table.*

110. **Ms. Baldeh** (Gambia) said she wished to express her delegation's deepest sympathy to the United States and its people as they sought to come to terms with the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

111. On behalf of Belize, Burkina Faso, Chad, Dominica, the Gambia, El Salvador, Malawi, Nicaragua, Palau, Panama, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, and Tuvalu, she requested the inclusion of item 188 in the agenda.

112. Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum was attached to document A/56/193 as annex I, and a draft resolution as annex II. The sponsors had requested the inclusion of item 188 in the agenda for the reasons outlined in the explanatory memorandum. The draft resolution proposed the establishment of a working group of the General Assembly with the mandate of examining thoroughly the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan with a view to ensuring the representation of its 23 million people at the United Nations.

113. In October 1971, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI), it had decided to give the China seat to the People's Republic of China, but had failed to address the issue of legitimate representation for the people of the Republic of China on Taiwan. The People's Republic of China had exercised no control whatever over the Republic of China on Taiwan since 1949, and the two countries had developed their own political systems, social values and foreign relations. Their case was indeed an exceptional one, since each country could only speak for and represent the people of its own jurisdiction.

114. The Republic of China on Taiwan was a democratic country and a constructive, responsible member of the international community committed to upholding international legal norms. Economically and technologically, its record was impressive, and it was active in the fields of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. It had provided disaster relief to the People's Republic of China, had developed a policy of trade, postal and shipping links with that country and was investing massively in it, particularly in the area of technology.

115. She hoped that the United Nations would serve as a forum to promote mutual understanding and good will between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan and would focus attention on reconciliation efforts. In the era of globalization, a time for inclusion rather than exclusion, a country like the Republic of China on Taiwan, which had a lot to offer, should not be left behind. The United Nations should give careful consideration to the question of the Republic of China on Taiwan, since its peopie had a legitimate right to participate in the activities of the Organization. It was also in the collective interest to press for a peaceful resolution of the differences between the two countries, a matter which had serious implications for that part of the world. The emphasis must be placed on cooperation rather than confrontation.

116. *Ms. Baldeh (Gambia) withdrew.*

117. **The Chairman** said that a number of non-member sponsors had asked to participate in the discussion of that item in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure. In addition, there were a number of non-member non-sponsors who had asked to participate. As he saw no objection, he took it that members agreed to waive rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

118. *It was so decided.*

119. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Bazel (Afghanistan), Mr. Cappagli (Argentina), Mr. Wang Yingfan (China), Mr. Requeijo Guam (Cuba), Mr. Kim Yong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), Mr. Padilla Tonos (Dominican Republic), Ms. Elliott (Guyana), Mr. Mangoaela (Lesotho), Mr. Gansukh (Mongolia), Mr. Clodumar (Nauru), Mr. Ferreira (Sao Tome and Principe), Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), and Mr. Nhleko (Swaziland) took places at the Committee table.*

120. **Mr. Wang** Yingfan (China) said that his delegation firmly opposed the inclusion of item 188 and hoped that the General Committee would continue to safeguard the purposes and principles of the Charter and to observe General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

121. There was only one China in the world, and Taiwan had been an inseparable part of China's territory since ancient times. It was an indisputable fact that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate Government representing the whole of China. By adopting resolution 2758 (XXVI) in 1971, the General Assembly had decided once and for all, in political, legal and procedural terms, the issue of China's representation at the United Nations. As a part of China, Taiwan was not eligible to

participate under any name or any pretext in the work or activities of the United Nations or its specialized agencies. To raise in whatever form the issue of Taiwan's participation constituted a serious violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter and of the pertinent resolution.

122. His delegation appreciated the position of the vast majority of Member States, which had abided by the "one-China" principle, had opposed Taiwan's participation in international organizations composed of sovereign States and had stood against the inclusion of the issue of Taiwan's so-called participation in the United Nations in the agenda of the General Assembly.

123. **Mr. Ferreira** (Sao Tome and Principe) said that membership in the United Nations was a right and not a privilege, and that the 23 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan should not be denied that right. The Republic of China on Taiwan was a dynamic member of the international community, and belonged to the family of democratic States that contributed to international security, sustainable development and humanitarian assistance. The Republic of China on Taiwan had been the main development partner of Sao Tome and Principe, a growing partnership that had produced positive economic and social effects in his country.

124. The Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, countries with much in common, must achieve understanding and cooperation while respecting each other's sovereignty and integrity. Using force or threatening to use force to seize the Republic of China on Taiwan endangered peace and security and violated the principles of the Charter: in that regard, recent signs of an arms race across the Taiwan Strait should be of deep concern to all.

125. Taking the view that Member States should not interfere in the internal affairs of other Member States reflected a failure to understand the lessons of East Timor and other recent humanitarian disasters. While recognizing the difficulties of the issue, his Government felt obliged, under the Charter, to work towards returning the Republic of China on Taiwan to the United Nations.

126. **Mr. Nhleko** (Swaziland) said that the Republic of China on Taiwan had existed as a sovereign State since 1912 and had had effective, exclusive control over the island since 1949. As such, it had obligations to fulfil but could not do so in its current situation. The United Nations had offered solace to a number of countries in a similar situation and should do the same for the Republic of China on Taiwan.

127. In keeping with this spirit of the twenty-first century, the Republic of China on Taiwan had made an effort to improve relations with the People's Republic of China. The participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in United Nations activities would help the Organization to uphold the principle of universality, achieve its goal of preventive diplomacy and facilitate reconciliation across the Taiwan Strait and the peace process in the region. To that end, his delegation welcomed the commitment of President Chen Shuibian to a new era of reconciliation. The Republic of China on Taiwan fulfilled all the obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, had a dynamic economy and a fully fledged democracy, was willing to abide by all United Nations human rights treaties and was pursuing various United Nations goals, including the eradication of poverty and disease abroad and environmental protection. His Government therefore appealed to the General Committee to do right by the Republic of China on Taiwan.

128. **Mr. Mangoaela** (Lesotho) said that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion of the item. Clearly, most delegations believed that Taiwan was part of China, and two Chinas could not be represented at the United Nations. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had definitively settled the question of China's representation to the United Nations and its agencies and its participation in their activities. Since there had been no change in the status quo, there was no need to discuss the issue.

129. **Mr. Clodumar** (Nauru) expressed his delegation's support for the inclusion of the proposed supplementary item. The Republic of China on Taiwan had a defined territory, a permanent population and a sovereign Government that was democratically elected and had the capacity to enter into relations with other States. By no stretch of the imagination was it a province of the People's Republic of China, which had never exercised any control over it.

130. In the past 30 years, Taiwan had grown to be the forty-sixth largest country in terms of population, the seventeenth largest economy and the fifteenth largest trading nation; it would probably be a Group A country for its assessed contributions to the United Nations regular and peacekeeping budgets. Consistent with the

provisions of Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, the Republic of China on Taiwan was a peace-loving State which had on many occasions declared its unconditional acceptance of the obligations contained in the Charter and was politically and economically willing and able to carry out its obligations. It was incomprehensible that certain Member States should obstruct its admission to the United Nations, particularly developing countries which had benefited economically and socially from over $200 million in Taiwan's annual contributions to regional development programmes, including those of the Asian Development Bank, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Republic of China on Taiwan had also provided disaster relief to countries the world over, including the People's Republic of China.

131. The continued exclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan from international conventions and agreements, regional and subregional bodies affiliated with the United Nations and specialized bodies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), would have disastrous consequences on its economy and people in the medium and long term. For example, the Republic of China on Taiwan, one of the six largest high-sea fishing countries in the world, had been excluded from the six consultative meetings on the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, even though the Agreement explicitly stated that countries not abiding by it would be subject to international boycott.

132. Similarly, if the Republic of China on Taiwan could not accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, it would be subject to trade embargoes and banned from importing chemicals and equipment for commercial use, representing a direct loss of about US$ 1.8 billion to the country's chemical industry. At the WHO/UNICEF meeting on vaccine supply planning and child immunization policies for the Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan, held in November 1993, Taiwan's pledge of US$ 200,000 in vaccines had been rejected because it was not a member of the United Nations or of the agencies in question, and Taiwan had been denied observer status in the WHO Assembly on five occasions. Denied assistance by a Geneva-based public health alliance managed by WHO, the Republic of China on Taiwan had lost 80 children during a 1998 enterovirus outbreak on the island. His delegation therefore urged the inclusion of the supplementary item in order to enable Member States to consider the draft resolution contained in annex II of document A/56/193. He noted that the Republic of China on Taiwan intended to contribute substantial resources to the multilateral development programmes of the United Nations specialized agencies for the least developed and developing countries and to various special-purpose funds, including the Global AIDS and Health Fund.

133. **Ms. Elliott** (Guyana) said that her delegation was strongly opposed to the inclusion of the supplementary item. Her Government was of the firm view that there was only one China, namely, the People's Republic of China, and it recognized Taiwan as an integral part of China. Since it had established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1972, Guyana had supported General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and, over the years, had urged other international and regional organizations to be guided by the provisions of the resolution as well. Any consideration of Taiwan's separate participation within the United Nations must be seen as a challenge to the integrity of earlier decisions taken by the Organization.

134. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) said that disregard for both the facts and a General Assembly resolution constituted a dangerous precedent which should be avoided. In its resolution 2758 (XXVI), the General Assembly had explicitly and unambiguously established the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations and declared that the restoration of the lawful rights of its people was essential for the protection of the Charter of the United Nations. Consistent with its unstinting position of previous years, his delegation categorically rejected the inclusion of the supplementary item or Taiwan's participation in any form in the work of the Organization, since there was only one China, of which Taiwan was an indivisible and integral part. Inclusion of the supplementary item would be contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United

Nations. It would be a blatant violation of the relevant General Assembly resolution and constitute interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China. He trusted that, as in previous years, the request would be rejected by the majority of General Committee members.

135. **Mr. Kim Yong** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the only lawful Government representing China in the United Nations was the People's Republic of China, and that Taiwan was an inseparable part of Chinese territory. That had already been confirmed by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). The proposed membership of Taiwan in the United Nations therefore constituted a violation of both that resolution and the Charter, and was contrary to the will of the Chinese people to reunify the country. His delegation was therefore opposed to the inclusion of the supplementary item.

136. **Mr. Bazel** (Afghanistan) said that, for decades, his delegation had affirmed that there was only one China and that Taiwan was a province of it. Fortunately, most delegations recognized that, under General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), Taiwan, as a part of China, was not eligible for membership in the United Nations or its specialized agencies. It was of paramount importance to ensure that the supplementary item was not included.

137. **Mr. de Saram** (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation's position was and had always been that there was only one China, namely, the People's Republic of China. Since General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) entrusted the representation of all of China to the People's Republic of China, his delegation opposed the inclusion of the supplementary item.

138. **Mr. Padilla Tonos** (Dominican Republic) said he supported the request for the inclusion of the supplementary item out of respect for the fundamental right of Taiwan's 23 million inhabitants to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations. The Organization should recognize that the Republic of China on Taiwan had the same rights as other States.

139. **Mr. Requeijo Guam** (Cuba) said that, since 1993, the request for inclusion of an item on Taiwan had been consistently rejected by the General Committee. Cuba's position was well known: inclusion of a supplementary item was not consistent with General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had justly and definitively established the representation of China to the United Nations by restoring the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China. The resolution clearly established the Government of the People's Republic of China as the only representative to the United Nations. His delegation hailed the desire of the People's Republic of China to promote a solution to the question of Taiwan and its proposals aimed at guaranteeing the protection of Taiwan's interests.

140. **Mr. Gansukh** (Mongolia) said that there was no compelling reason for inclusion of the supplementary item, since it was well known that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had settled the question of the representation of the Chinese people and Government. The inclusion of a supplementary item would be contrary not only to the political reality but also to the principled decision taken by the General Assembly in 1971.

141. **Mr. Cappagli** (Argentina) said that, in adopting resolution 2758 (XXVI), the United Nations had demonstrated that the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China was essential for the protection of the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization had resolved the question of the representation of China 30 years earlier by recognizing the Government of the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations and a permanent member of the Security Council. Argentina and the People's Republic of China had normalized their diplomatic relations through the adoption of a joint communiqué in 1972, in which the Argentine Government had recognized the authorities of the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representatives of the Government of China and considered Taiwan as an inalienable part of the territory of the People's Republic of China. Thus, Argentina could not support the request to include an item in the agenda on Taiwan's admission to the United Nations. His delegation was strongly convinced that inclusion of the supplementary item would violate one of the core principles of the United Nations, namely, the territorial integrity of Member States. Argentina had strongly defended that norm, enshrined in the Charter and various Assembly resolutions, including resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2625 (XXV), and would continue to do so. His delegation was therefore opposed to including the supplementary item.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.